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## St. Paul downtown to remain open during convention

by [Tim Pugmire](#), Minnesota Public Radio

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St. Paul, Minn. — A top police official is promising that downtown St. Paul will remain open and accessible during next year's Republican National Convention.

With 45,000 people expected in the Twin Cities next year for the Republican National Convention, local residents have speculated that downtown St. Paul would be in a virtual lockdown during the four-day event. Assistant Chief Matt Bostrom of the St. Paul Police Department is trying to bust that myth.

He says businesses near the Xcel Energy Center will remain open, and pedestrians will be able to walk closer than they might expect. Bostrom says police will also allow demonstrators within sight and sound of the convention.

"Most groups that want to deliver their free speech message, are doing that in a non-violent fashion, we can easily accommodate that," says Bostrom. "Our challenge is going to be to make sure that we're able to protect them simultaneously from those who would want to disrupt that."

Bostrom says he'll try to meet with groups that have said they want to disrupt the convention. He says he'll try to suggest alternatives for those protesters to deliver their messages.

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